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SUBJECT: NORTH KATANGA: THE WEAKEST SECURITY LINK IN THE VOLATILE EAST?

REF: A. 95 KIN 1940

[1](#)B. KIN 56

[1](#)C. KIN 747

[1](#)D. KIN 774

[1](#)E. KIN 572

[11](#). (SBU) Summary: The north Katangan region of Tanganyika, larger in size than North Kivu, South Kivu, or Ituri district but also volatile, is the final geographic piece of the eastern border of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Plagued by insecurity, Tanganyika nevertheless receives far less attention than its sister provinces and districts to the north. In a June 17-18 visit to Kalemie, the capital of Tanganyika district, Poloff talked to MONUC officials, NGOs, UN aid agencies, and Tanganyika District Administrator Jean-Robert Tshimanga about security. All agreed that three major security threats exist in the district -- ex-Mai Mai militia, un-integrated Congolese Army Forces (FARDC), and competing state security organs -- and that MONUC and CONADER attempts to handle them have so far proved largely unsuccessful. End summary.

Congolese, Not Foreign, Armed Groups

[12](#). (SBU) During the last conflict (1998-2003), Katanga province was divided by fighting between the Rally for Congolese Democracy - Goma (RCD-G) faction, supported by Rwanda, and the ex-Government faction, supported by local Mai Mai troops. While the RCD-G and some Mai Mai militia have been subsumed into the FARDC, many Mai Mai elements remain outside of government control. According to MONUC Kalemie Poloff, an estimated 5,000-6,000 Mai Mai militia are still active in the Tanganyika region and have strongholds around Nyunzu-Kabalo-Kongolo and the so-called "death triangle" of Manono-Mitwaba-Pweto. The majority of these Mai Mai form small, unstructured units with no chain of command and have largely devolved, she said, into common bandits.

[13](#). (SBU) The FARDC 6th Military Region began operations against Mai Mai militia in November 2005 (Ref A). More than 75,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) who had fled Mai Mai attacks in the first half of 2005 began to return home. However, an additional 30,000-50,000 IDPs fled their homes to escape FARDC - Mai Mai fighting (Ref B). On May 12, renegade Mai Mai leader Gedeon and approximately 350 of his troops, responsible for some of the most horrific human rights violations in the district, surrendered and requested demobilization (Ref C,D). According to Tanganyika District Administrator Tshimanga, the Mai Mai situation has significantly improved since the surrender. MONUC Eastern Division confirms a dramatic decrease in the activities of

certain Mai Mai elements, but notes that continued looting of villages and harassment of the local population has been reported as recently as 13 June in Moba and Pweto territories.

FARDC Brassage Departure Leaves (In)security Vacuum

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¶4. (SBU) There are nearly 19,400 FARDC in north Katanga, none of whom have gone through integration. These non-integrated brigades are individually composed of ex-Mai Mai, ex-government, and ex-RDC-G soldiers, headed by commanders from other ex-militia components. (Note: For instance, the 6th Military Region Commander, General Lukole, is ex-Mai Mai and a friend of the late President Laurent Kabila. End note.) The FARDC troops have been accused of contributing to the instability of north Katanga, both through attacks on Mai Mai militia which caused massive population flight and through continued predatory behavior against the local population.

¶5. (SBU) In a bizarre symbiotic relationship, Mai Mai militia and FARDC troop actions have tended to complement one another in terrorizing the population -- Mai Mai elements burn villages and FARDC elements loot whatever remains. According to MONUC, both contribute to the lack of freedom of movement and basic security for civilians due to road blocks and systematic extortion. Both armed elements (as well as state security organs discussed below) have been accused of committing acts of violence and gross human rights violations while competing for illegal tax collection and control of rich mines in the district.

¶6. (SBU) The recent departure for brassage (integration) of many of the FARDC battalions in north Katanga has left a security vacuum in the area, according to MONUC Kalemie

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Poloff. With limited MONUC resources (discussed below), Tanganyika province could be left open to Mai Mai or local police harassment of the population. Conversely, however, the departure of some FARDC troops could lead to increased Mai Mai demobilization as there is an unresolved crisis of confidence between FARDC and those relatively cooperative Mai Mai groups willing to enter the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) process. The 2005 "Lunga War" incident, in which FARDC reportedly ambushed ex-Mai Mai commanders wanting to disarm, frightened some Mai Mai away from giving up arms.

Rival Intelligence Services Harass Population

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¶7. (SBU) In a late 2005 directive, President Joseph Kabila replaced governing RCD-G officials in all top district administrative positions with People's Party for Reconstruction and Development (PPRD) officials. However, the RCD-G's intelligence agency, the Department of Security and Intelligence (DSR), continues to exist pending an order from the President directing otherwise. The GDRC intelligence structure, the National Intelligence Agency (ANR), which reports to the president, is also operating in the district. Thus another security threat to the population is the existence of not one, but two, intelligence agencies functioning as ad-hoc police and extortionists. Neither the DSR nor the ANR (nor the Congolese National Police (PNC), nor the FARDC, for that matter) are receiving salaries from the national or provincial governments -- all derive their earnings from the local population. The state security agencies and the police, along with the Mai Mai and FARDC, have been investigated by MONUC Human Rights Division for illegal road blocks, extortion, house burning, looting, exactions, appropriations of land, rapes, and torture. Added to the mix, according to the UN Office for Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Kalemie representative, are twenty Presidential Guards (GSSP) who, having arrived in advance of President Kabila's June 14 visit to Kalemie, have not left town. They have been accused of exactions and

sexual violence.

CONADER's Mission Failure

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¶8. (SBU) CONADER, the national DDR agency, opened its doors in Kalemie on January 16, 2006 and received its first combatants on January 26. A tidal wave of unverifiable ex-Mai Mai militia arrived for demobilization as did a large number of civilians looking for ways to qualify for the demobilization payout (Note: By bringing in found hand grenades, for example. End note). Through May 2, when CONADER closed its door to any new soldier wishing to demobilize, 3000 ex-militia were received; only 2 requested integration into the FARDC. Since May 2, according to MONUC Kalemie Poloff, the only option now available at the CONADER Kalemie office is integration into the Congolese military. CONADER officially closed the center due to the high level of fraud in the ID process and the unwillingness of MONUC to act as anything but a witness to the process. (Note: MONUC does not have the lists of Mai Mai militias that CONADER wants to verify military status. In fact, no one does, as the Mai Mai were largely an ad-hoc army with no central command. End note.) According to the visiting OCHA Lubumbashi Representative, one proposed solution to the problem of local people coming to CONADER as "ex-combatants" with discarded weapons to get money, is to create a mobile DDR which would travel directly to Mai Mai groups for demobilization. However, given the vast insecurity in the region, mobile DDR is not currently feasible. At present, 600-700 ex-Mai Mai are in Kalemie town waiting for demobilization. They and their families represent both a humanitarian crisis -- they have no food or shelter or means of support -- and a security problem -- the risk of rerecruitment increases as they wait with no assistance.

¶9. (SBU) MONUC Kalemie Poloff claims that hundreds of Mai Mai want to demobilize; however, with no place to go and no CONADER center to assist them in the reintegration to civilian life, they remain in the bush and prey on the local population. (Note: MONUC Kalemie officers have regular contact with ex-Mai Mai militia and indeed facilitated the surrender of warlord Gedeon in April. End note.) Tshimanga, the Tanganyika District Administrator, believes that increased Radio Okapi advertising about DDR for Mai Mai

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willing to disarm would be particularly effective. Internal MONUC documents call the downsizing of Radio Okapi in Kalemie "a major setback in promoting the DDR campaign and pacification of local militia elements." MONUC Kalemie Poloff added that education and sensitization are crucial for Mai Mai who have been in the bush so long they still believe they are fighting Rwanda.

¶10. (SBU) According to the OCHA Kalemie Representative, the DDR process in Tanganyika is dysfunctional not just because of weak sensitization of combatants about the DDR process, but also due to the lack of planning and coordination between institutions in charge of the process (CONADER, MONUC, civil and military authorities), the difficulties of transporting soldiers, and delays in paying civil reinsertion fees to the 3800 demobilized militia estimated to be residing in Tanganyika district. Furthermore, according to MONUC, confusion reigns among ex-combatants on disarmament procedures and eligibility for assistance. Those who have handed over their weapons to local non-integrated FARDC brigades in the past month were not accepted into Kalemie's CONADER orientation camp because CONADER procedures require disarmament at disarmament focal points, not to random FARDC troops.

¶11. (SBU) One final problem with DDR in the region comes from Molunda, a local pastor with reported ties to the PPRD, who started his own demobilization program to distribute bicycles to any soldier wishing to disarm. Unlike CONADER,

he provided no livelihood assistance to those he "disarmed," nor was he able to issue demobilization certificates. Mai Mai hearing about this program swamped CONADER demanding bicycles. Others, demobilized through Pastor Molunda's NGO, have no proof of demobilization and can re-demobilize for additional cash. Without demobilization certificates, they are also subject to charges of desertion by FARDC troops, according to MONUC. Pastor Molunda's program has ultimately proved unsustainable and has created false expectations among ex-combatants. It has also led to children looking for weapons (Note: Northern and central Katanga are littered with land mines and unexploded ordinance from the 1998-2003 war) to receive bicycles.

#### MONUC Understaffed for Uncertain Mission

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¶12. (SBU) MONUC's military presence in north and central Katanga is just that, a presence. Despite their 2005 request for a full brigade to focus exclusively on Katanga (Ref E), MONUC's total military strength is 700 troops and 89 military observers including the long-awaited and recently-arrived Benin battalion. With such a small contingent, compared to many times the number in each of the much smaller Kivus, MONUC forces have limited their duties to 1) acting as eyes and ears, 2) protecting UN and humanitarian workers, and 3) monitoring the arms embargo. Unlike in Ituri, the MONUC mission in Kalemie defines itself as there strictly for observation, not disarmament. Furthermore, the small MONUC Katanga force does not conduct joint operation with FARDC (as is done in other provinces) as the FARDC troops in the area are not integrated. According to their interpretation of the mandate, MONUC may not support non-integrated FARDC brigades in joint operations or in training. MONUC cooperates with FARDC only in filling logistical gaps, i.e. helping with food and gas distribution, and in sharing patrol plans for security operation.

#### What This Means for Elections

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¶13. (SBU) The continued insecurity in the region raises flags for elections participation. Most violence against civilians occurs not in the center of Kalemie town, according to MONUC, but 15 kilometers outside of it, where even the state security organs are not in control. MONUC Kalemie Poloff said that MONUC cannot ensure the security of polling stations for the north Katanga population residing outside of major population centers -- that is the responsibility of the poorly-functioning FARDC/PNR. The reality, she said, is that the majority of people in Tanganyika district will not vote for safety reasons. (Comment: Although MONUC made similarly dire predictions before the December referendum vote, when security conditions in Katanga province were the same (or worse), 74% of voters still turned out. This is probably a good indicator of what to expect for the upcoming elections.

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End comment.)

¶14. (SBU) Comment: Tanganyika, the last contiguous part of volatile eastern Congo, has largely been left out of the military, DDR, and other security operations targeted at the neighboring Kivus and Ituri. Largely because the militias in the district are home-grown and not foreign fighters on Congolese soil, MONUC's mission, as interpreted by the Kalemie office, gives them far less leeway to stabilize their sector via military action. Even if they were so inclined, however, 789 troops, aided by a mishmash of non-integrated and largely untrained FARDC soldiers, have a limited ability to establish order. Furthermore, CONADER's abject failure in Kalemie, because of fraud, insufficient funds, and the unanticipated proportion of soldiers opting out of future military service, not only fails to help the situation, but actually exacerbates it. For the southern part of DRC's eastern frontier to finally find some measure of peace will

require far more commitment among national and international actors. End comment.  
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